

through this historic investment in infrastructure in our country and to come to agreement in the U.S. Senate to move forward with this historic piece of legislation.

Now, I know that many of my colleagues will talk about some of the virtues of the legislation and the great things that it will do for the States that we all are proud to represent, the States that all of us Senators represent across this country. But what I would like to direct my brief remarks to this evening are not the details of this legislative text—though they are significant, and I think they are very meaningful and will have an impact on the daily lives of Americans. What I would like to speak about is the very process.

I know it has been difficult, and I know it has been long, and what I am proud to say is that is what our forefathers intended when they created a system of government that required Republicans and Democrats to come together in a coequal branch of government and work with each other and with the administration to find legislation and solutions that meet the needs of our country, individuals, and families, companies, communities. It is difficult; it is time consuming; and it is exactly what our country insisted and demands of us every single day: to take the time to work with each other to find common ground, to compromise, and to be willing to work with each other—to give a little, to get a little—in order to achieve what is right and what is best for the American people.

I think the process we are embarking on this evening, as we soon will join together with our colleagues of both political parties, representing every State across the country, is an important one, and it sends a message to the individuals across this country and, indeed, to individuals across this world that the U.S. Government can work. It is difficult; it is time consuming; it can be hard; but this very process of finding bipartisan compromise and working together to overcome obstacles to achieve the objectives that the American people are depending upon us to do is the very heart and the very core of why each of us serves in this government, and I, for one—in addition to being tired, I, for one, am incredibly proud of this process. It is why I ran for office, and I believe it is why we have all run for office: to work together to overcome differences, to find solutions, and to make a difference in the lives of the American people.

As we will see in the coming days, as we hear from our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, offering amendments and adjustments to this legislation, and, ultimately, I believe, passing this legislation out of the Senate, with a strong bipartisan record, we will continue to once again demonstrate to our country and to the world that we can, indeed, do our jobs; that we can legislate; that we can work together; and that we can put aside our own political differences for the greater good of our country.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

H.R. 3684

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I concur with the comments of my colleague from Arizona. She put it well.

This is a really important bill because it takes our aging and outdated infrastructure in this country and modernizes it, and that is good for everybody. It is good for the truckdriver who can leave home, knowing he is going to be safer on our roads and bridges. It is good for the mom who commutes to work and is sick of waiting in rush-hour traffic on the way to work and on the way back because she would rather spend more time with her kids. It is good for the factory worker in Ohio who makes things that need to be transported. We make tanks in Ohio; we make cars in Ohio; we make washing machines. They go all over the world. Our ports—our land ports and our seaports—are inefficient and backed up. It is good for our consumers who are waiting for products from all over the world because our ports are backed up.

Our infrastructure is way behind, and we will talk a lot more about that over the next couple of days with some very specific data as to how we have fallen behind, how we are not competitive anymore, how China has surpassed us in terms of infrastructure. As a percent of their economy, they spend about four times more than we do. Why? Because they get it. This helps make the economy more efficient, more productive, and, therefore, it actually returns an investment to the American people.

We are also going to hear about how it is not going to increase inflation like some of the other spending that is being talked about around here, partly because it is long-term spending for capital assets. It is spending that is going to add to the supply side, meaning it is actually going to be counter-inflationary and create more jobs. We hear all about that, but one thing that I do want to make sure that we hear about tonight is the fact that this process of starting from the center out has worked.

People have talked about infrastructure in this city forever. President Trump had a \$1.5 trillion infrastructure package. Ours is \$550 billion, by the way. Five percent of his was paid for. Ours is paid for. We made a commitment early on that we were going to do two things: One, we were going to focus on core infrastructure. So, when President Biden introduced a \$2.65 trillion bill and called it infrastructure, we said: Well, there is some good stuff in there, but let's pull out the good stuff, the core infrastructure because a lot of it had nothing to do with infrastructure. And, second, we said: You know what? We are not going to do it by raising taxes. We are not going to hurt the American worker more and make

America less competitive in this; we are going to do just the opposite.

We kept to those two principles, and I am so proud of that; that tonight we can say the amendment, the substitute amendment, is going to be offered, and it is going to keep to that commitment of \$555 billion—no new taxes, core infrastructure only—and it is great for the American people.

I want to thank a few people who got us here who are going to be able, over the next few days, to tell us in great detail of the role they played because it was significant on every one of their parts.

First, of course, Senator SINEMA; she has been the one who has kept us on track, and that has been very important, but also to my colleagues who are here tonight on the floor, Senator SUSAN COLLINS, Senator LISA MURKOWSKI, Senator MITT ROMNEY, Senator BILL CASSIDY—my Republican colleagues whom we have worked with over the last 4 months—and each has made huge contributions to this.

I want to thank the White House for their work with us because they said early on: OK. We want to do this, too, in a bipartisan way.

We said: OK. If you are serious, we do too.

And, sure enough, we negotiated. It was tough, and we had a lot of differences, but we were able to get to this point tonight.

Just as important is the group on the other side of the aisle who made this work, and I see my colleague Senator MANCHIN here. I see Senator WARNER here. It looks like he really wants to speak. I see Senator SHAHEEN here, who is about to speak, and I see Senator TESTER wandering around here somewhere. These are the folks on the other side of the so-called G-10 who made it happen.

And then a much bigger group. So to my colleagues who also helped in the 22 working groups we had in putting this together and did such a great job, RICHARD BURR, LINDSEY GRAHAM, MIKE ROUNDS, THOM TILLIS, JERRY MORAN, CHRIS COONS, MAGGIE HASSAN, JOHN HICKENLOOPER, MARK KELLY, ANGUS KING, JACKY ROSEN—11 Democrats and 11 Republicans.

And then, to my friends who took us over the top the other night on the first vote we had on this, I appreciate them because they were not involved as much on the details, but they know this is the right thing for the country, and many of them did help to get us where we are: KEVIN CRAMER, MIKE CRAPO, MITCH MCCONNELL, ROY BLUNT, CHUCK GRASSLEY, JOHN HOEVEN, JIM RISCH.

Folks, we wouldn't be here without every one of them, and we thank all of the folks who have put so much time and effort into this.

And, mostly, we got to thank our staffs because none of us would be here standing tonight, doing this, if we didn't have staff who had been working their hearts out, staying here until 12

midnight, ensuring that every single thing in this bill has been looked over carefully to make sure that we got it right.

And we are getting it right tonight for the American people, for our economy, and for the future of our great country.

I yield to my colleague from Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

H.R. 3684

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I also want to, first of all, thank all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. Senator SINEMA and Senator PORTMAN have taken the lead. I want to thank them both—and Senator PORTMAN for taking at least 40 seconds of my time to enumerate all of our colleagues who were part of this effort.

I also want to thank the staff and acknowledge, as he did, the incredibly important role the White House played. At some point in this process, the White House realized that they couldn't just support this initiative, but they actually had to own it, and they were intimately involved in all of the details, and it is something that I know they will share with all my Democratic colleagues.

I also want to thank the majority leader. He has given us the time we need to get here, to get a 3,000—close to a 3,000-page bill to this floor, this comprehensive. I know it has taken a little more time than, maybe, all of us thought, but the fact is we have been talking about this for 30 years under Democrats, Republicans—both political parties at various times over the last 30 years—because Senator PORTMAN is right. Other nations are now investing at a level much greater than ours. So this record of a \$550 billion investment in hard infrastructure over 5 years has never been done before.

Senator MANCHIN often pointed out, as we were sometimes feuding and fighting over some of the details, that no pothole ever decided it was only going to hit a Democrat or a Republican. It hit everybody's cars.

We all know we have got thousands of bridges that need to be repaired. We all know that, post-COVID, high-speed broadband is not a “nice to have”; it is a necessity. We all know too many Americans go without access to clean drinking water.

This legislation will be debated and, I hope, passed in a strong bipartisan way. We will show our country, and we will show the world that no country around the world can keep up with us when we make these kind of investments.

I thank my colleagues.

With that, I yield to my great friend, the Senator from Maine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

H.R. 3684

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, let me begin my remarks this evening by expressing my appreciation to Senators PORTMAN and SINEMA for their extraordinary leadership of our group, our bipartisan group, of 10 Senators, who have labored so hard to bring before the Senate the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

This legislation represents the most significant investment in our infrastructure since the construction of the Interstate Highway System. Think about that. For generations, for decades, we have talked about the need to rebuild our roads and our bridges, our airports, our seaports, our waterways, our water treatment systems, and, today, to expand high-speed internet access to Americans throughout our country no matter where they live—whether they are in the northern regions of Maine or an inner city neighborhood—and that is exactly what this legislation would do.

I want to just quickly give an example from my own State of Maine.

Maine has 315 bridges and nearly 1,500 miles of roads that are rated as being in poor condition. Now the State of Maine will have the funding that will enable it to make major investments in the repair and replacement of this critical infrastructure. I am particularly pleased that the legislation includes \$65 billion to expand access to broadband.

And I want to thank my colleague Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN, who worked so closely with me. We were partners in this endeavor, and this is going to make such a difference to students who are doing online courses, to seniors who want access to telemedicine, to individuals who are able to work from home, but none of that is possible without access to high-speed internet services.

I am very pleased to be part of this group, and I am also delighted to demonstrate to the American people that we can work across the aisle in a bipartisan way to achieve real results that matter to the people of this country.

I yield to the Senator from New Hampshire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

H.R. 3684

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am very proud to be here with the rest of my colleagues to present this bill that will make the biggest investment in infrastructure, as Senator COLLINS said so well, since the Interstate Highway System back in the 1950s.

This is really an extraordinary work product that results from the leadership of Senators SINEMA and PORTMAN and from the cooperation of everybody on this floor. There were an equal number of Democrats and Republicans—a number who are not here tonight who have worked on this bill—the work of

committee chairs and ranking members in the Senate who have done so much to put together underlying bills that we used in moving this forward and, of course, all of the staff from our personal offices, from the Appropriations Committee, from all of the committees that worked on this bill.

As has been said, this is the biggest investment in infrastructure with \$550 million—billion in new spending over the next 5 years. It builds on annual appropriations. It is an investment in roads and bridges, in water and wastewater, and transit, the electric grid.

We have got to do this because right now we are investing less than our competitors—less than China, less than India, less than Europe; less than we were spending in the United States in the 1960s. And if we are going to stay competitive, if we are going to provide opportunities for the people in this country, we have got to make these investments.

As my partner in broadband said, if kids are going to have an equal opportunity for the future, then they need to have access to high-speed internet.

More important, I think, is the point that all of my colleagues so far have made, and that is that this bill shows that Republicans and Democrats can work together to address the needs of this country; that our government is not broken. We can make it work if everybody works together.

So I know we have a lot of work ahead of us to get this bill through the floor of the Senate and then through the House, and get the help out to the American people. But I know that in this Chamber we are committed to getting that done and to making sure that we make these investments to move the country forward.

So thank you, Mr. President.

I yield to my colleague from Alaska, Senator MURKOWSKI.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. KAINE). The Senator from Alaska.

H.R. 3684

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, it is indeed a pleasure to be on the floor, even though it is a little bit late on a Sunday evening, but to be here with colleagues that we have spent probably more time with one another than we have with our families, our spouses, our roommates, and what have you. But we have been working to build a product not only that we are proud to stand behind but a product that I believe the American public will be proud of the work that we have put into this—work not just of this group but, again, the broader group of 22.

And also we recognize the very solid work that comes from our committees. We recognize all that was built at the committee level to help kick-start in so many different—in so many different—areas, but also to build the base of much of this infrastructure bill that we have in front of us today.